

I would like to thank all of my partners for their comments and support. Their experience and insight on nonprofit issues is so important to me and my office.

As a legislator - and a citizen - I know the nonprofit sector plays a unique and vital role in the life of our country. Every community in America - and every congressional district - is strengthened by the work of nonprofit organizations. One out of every 10 Americans works for a nonprofit. And government - at all levels - relies on the nonprofit sector to implement and support public policies.

However, as powerful and productive as nonprofit organizations are, their needs are not being addressed by Congress or the Administration. That must change.

Today, nonprofits are regulated by the IRS but poorly represented in Congress. No committee in the House or Senate has responsibility for the success of the nonprofit sector. No federal agency is focused on making nonprofit organizations more effective. Washington needs to start caring as much about strengthening nonprofit organizations as it does about regulating them.

The Federal government has a number of programs, including the Small Business Administration, dedicated to supporting for-profit companies. It is appropriate and necessary that the Federal government would provide at least a measure of that focus and support to the non-profit sector.

Last night, I introduced the *Nonprofit Sector and Community Solutions Act* (H.R. 5533). This legislation is a first-step toward creating a more effective partnership between the Federal government and the nonprofit sector. The legislation establishes a new United States Council on the Nonprofit Sector. The Council will be a forum for leaders of nonprofits, foundations, businesses and government to discuss strategies for strengthening the nonprofit sector. The bill also creates an Inter-agency Working Group on the Nonprofit Sector. This group will ensure that high-level representatives from cabinet agencies and other key agencies coordinate and improve federal policies pertaining to nonprofit organizations. Finally, the legislation directs Federal agencies to collect and publish better data on nonprofits AND to support research that will lead to smarter Federal policy.

This bill is only a first step. But it is the beginning of a positive conversation about the nonprofit sector in Washington, DC. Working with these nonprofit champions we can:

- Build a stronger nonprofit sector
- Craft smarter federal policy
- Create more vibrant communities in every state

I look forward to building a coalition of support for this legislation in Congress.

Thank you.